

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend claims 7-13 and add new claims 14-16, such that the current status of the claims is as follows:

1. (Original) A mounting bracket capable of attachment to a vehicle frame for pivotally connecting a booster axle assembly having a pair of spaced arms, each arm having a first end and a second end, and an axle connected between the pair of spaced arms near the second end of the arms, the mounting bracket comprising:

a U-shaped portion having a base disposed in a plane extending in X and Y dimensions and a pair of spaced legs connected to the base and extending in a first direction generally normal to the base in a Z dimension, each leg of the pair of spaced legs having a free end, the pair of spaced legs and base defining a space for receiving the first end of one of the arms of the booster axle assembly, wherein each leg defines first and second appendages spaced apart in the Y dimension, the first and second appendages of each leg defining a slot that extends in the Z dimension from the free end of the leg toward the base; and

a mounting plate connected to the base of the U-shaped portion and extending in a second direction normal to the base in the Z dimension.

2. (Original) The mounting bracket of claim 1, and further comprising aligned openings extending through the first and second appendages of the pair of spaced legs in the Y dimension.

3. (Original) The mounting bracket of claim 1, and further comprising a plurality of openings in the mounting plate for attaching the mounting bracket to the vehicle frame.

4. (Original) The mounting bracket of claim 1, and further comprising a gusset connecting the mounting plate and the base of the U-shaped portion.

5. (Original) The mounting bracket of claim 1 wherein the slot extends substantially up to the base.

6. (Original) The mounting bracket of claim 1 wherein the U-shaped portion and the mounting plate are formed unitarily.

7. (Currently Amended) A pivot mount system for pivotally mounting a booster axle assembly to first and second frame members of a vehicle frame, wherein the booster axle assembly comprises a pair of spaced arms having first and second ends and an axle connected to the pair of spaced arms at the respective second ends of the pair of spaced arms, the pivot mount system comprising:

a mounting bracket attached to each of the first and second frame members near a rear of the vehicle frame, each mounting bracket comprising:

a U-shaped portion having a base disposed in a plane extending in X and Y dimensions and a pair of spaced legs connected to the base and extending in a first direction generally normal to the base in a Z dimension, each leg of the pair of spaced legs having a free end, the pair of spaced legs and base defining a space for receiving the first end of one of the arms of the booster axle ~~system~~ assembly, wherein each leg defines first and second appendages spaced apart in the Y dimension, the first and second appendages of each leg defining a slot that extends in the Z dimension from the free end of the leg toward the base; and

a mounting plate connected to the base of the U-shaped portion and extending in a second direction normal to the base in the Z dimension, the mounting plate secured to a respective frame member of the vehicle frame;

a bearing housing connected to the first end of each arm of the pair of spaced arms, the bearing housing containing a pivot bearing therein, the pivot bearing defining a central opening, the bearing housing positioned in the space of the mounting bracket; and

a pivot pin having a length in the X dimension positioned within the central opening of the pivot bearing with opposing end portions of the pivot pin exposed on opposite sides of the bearing housing, the end portions of the pivot pin secured within the slots of the mounting bracket.

8. (Currently Amended) The pivot mount system of claim ± 7 , wherein the mounting bracket further comprises aligned openings extending through the first and second appendages of the pair of spaced legs in the Y dimension, for connecting the mounting bracket to the pivot pin.

9. (Currently Amended) The ~~mounting bracket~~ pivot mount system of claim ± 7 , and further comprising a plurality of openings in the mounting plate for attaching the mounting bracket to the vehicle frame.

10. (Currently Amended) The ~~mounting bracket~~ pivot mount system of claim ± 7 , and further comprising a gusset connecting the mounting plate and the base of the U-shaped portion.

11. (Currently Amended) The ~~mounting bracket~~ pivot mount system of claim ± 7 wherein the slot extends substantially up to the base.

12. (Currently Amended) The ~~mounting bracket~~ pivot mount system of claim 1 ~~7~~ wherein the U-shaped portion and the mounting plate are formed unitarily.

13. (Currently Amended) A pivot mount system for pivotally mounting a booster arm assembly to a vehicle frame the pivot mount system comprising:

a U-shaped portion having a base disposed in a plane extending in X and Y dimensions and a pair of spaced legs extending in a Z dimension, the spaced legs defining a pair of connection sites for connecting the U-shaped portion to a pivot bearing;
and

a mounting plate disposed in a first plane extending in the Y and Z dimensions, the first plane arranged generally parallel to the pair of connection sites and substantially between the pair of connection sites, wherein the mounting plate and the U-shaped portion are formed unitarily, and wherein the mounting plate is attached to a frame member of the vehicle frame and the mounting plate is located adjacent one side of the frame member.

14. (New) The mounting bracket of claim 4, wherein the gusset is disposed substantially in a plane extending in the X and Z dimensions.

15. (New) The pivot mount system of claim 7, wherein the bearing housings are welded integrally to the end of each arm.

16. (New) The pivot mount system of claim 13, wherein the pivot bearing is removably connected to the U-shaped member and permanently connected to the booster arm assembly.